

NRAS Information Sheet

General Information

The National Rental Affordability Scheme (**NRAS**) is an initiative launched by the Australian Government for the purpose of providing assistance and funding to:

- increase the supply of affordable rental dwellings in the residential rental market; and
- reduce rental costs to low and mid-income earners,

by offering financial incentives to providers of new residential rental dwellings to encourage investment, on a large scale, to provide more affordable housing Australia wide.

The Australian Government grants the incentives to providers of accommodation on the condition that the NRAS-approved rental dwellings are provided to low to moderate income earners at a minimum of 20% below market valuation rates.

NRAS Dwellings at ECU Village, Mt Lawley Campus

As an approved NRAS accommodation provider, Campus Living Villages at ECU Pty Limited (**CLV**), currently provides 70 NRAS-approved dwellings at ECU Village, Mt Lawley (new build), which first opened to students in 2011 (**NRAS Dwellings**). The NRAS Dwellings comprise:

- 69 x Poolside Studio apartments; and
- 1 x two bedroom apartment.

NRAS Conditions

To receive the Government incentives, ECU Village is required to satisfy numerous legislative conditions which apply to the NRAS Dwellings, including (but is not limited to):

- (a) NRAS Dwellings are to be allocated to low to moderate income earners (income not to exceed the NRAS income threshold);
- (b) Residential fees applicable for NRAS Dwellings are 20% below market valuation rates;
- (c) NRAS Dwellings must be offered for 52 week Residential Agreements; and
- (d) Applicants travelling from elsewhere in Australia to be given priority for NRAS Dwellings.

To ensure compliance with the NRAS conditions, ECU Village must check an applicant's initial eligibility (and continuing eligibility for re-applying residents) to live in NRAS Dwellings. See FAQs below for more information on eligibility requirements.

If you have any questions about your eligibility, whether your room/ apartment relates to an NRAS Dwelling or generally in relation to NRAS, please contact Village management on leanne.english@clv.com.au or +61 8 9370 6376.

FAQs

Listed below are some frequently asked questions regarding NRAS Dwellings at ECU Village.

1. What is NRAS?

NRAS is the National Rental Affordability Scheme, an Australian Government initiative that aims to address the shortage of affordable rental accommodation by offering a financial incentive to accommodation providers, on the condition that the NRAS-approved dwellings are rented to eligible low to moderate income earners at 20% below market valuation rates.

2. Which are the NRAS approved dwellings at ECU Village, Mt Lawley campus?

ECU Village currently offers 70 NRAS-approved dwellings at Mt Lawley campus (new build), comprising the following dwellings within the poolside area (the **NRAS Dwellings**):

- 69 x studio poolside apartments; and
- 1 x two bedroom poolside apartment.

3. Am I eligible?

To be eligible to be considered for an NRAS Dwelling, irrespective of whether you are a domestic or international student or otherwise, your gross annual income (in Australian Dollars) must not exceed the Initial Income Limit set out below:

Person type	Initial income Limit	Upper income Limit
First adult	\$47,289	\$59,111
Each additional adult	\$18,089	\$22,611
Combined Total	\$65,378	\$81,722

The annual Income Limits specified above apply for 2014-2015 NRAS Year (indexed in accordance with the NRAS tenant income index on 1 May each year).

The "**each additional adult**" limit applies to each additional adult living in a shared NRAS Dwelling. For example:

- (a) **Sole occupancy studio apartment** - the initial income limit of a resident living in a studio apartment will be **\$47,289**;
- (b) **Shared Studio apartment** - the combined initial income limit of a couple living in a studio apartment will be **\$65,378**; and
- (c) **Two bedroom apartment** – the combined initial income limit of two residents living in the two bedroom apartment will be **\$65,378**.

When applying for an NRAS Dwelling, the gross annual income of the applicant must not exceed the Initial Income Limit at the time of becoming a resident of an NRAS Dwelling (i.e. on the Residential Agreement commencement date). Income may, however, increase during the relevant 12 month period up to 25% of the Initial Income Limit (i.e. the Upper Income Limit) before eligibility is affected.

Residents of NRAS Dwellings must notify Village if they expect their income to increase from that declared at the time of entering into the Residential Agreement. See Question 5 (What do I have to provide to consider my initial eligibility).

4. Why do I have to provide information about my income?

To ensure compliance with the NRAS conditions, an NRAS approved accommodation provider, is required to assess each applicant's eligibility to live in an NRAS Dwelling. The income information provided by you allows ECU Village to assess your eligibility and to allocate available accommodation in a manner that is consistent with NRAS conditions.

If you do not wish to provide your income information to ECU Village, you will not be eligible to be considered for a room in an NRAS Dwelling. The Village will, however, consider your application for a non-NRAS Dwelling at ECU Village.

5. *What do I have to provide to consider my initial eligibility (NRAS Income Notification Form)?*

To be eligible, your annual gross income must not exceed the Initial Income Limit (see Question 2 above). To enable the Village to assess your eligibility, you are required to, along with your application for accommodation, provide an estimate of your annual gross income for the 12 month period ending on the day before your the start of your proposed Residential Agreement.

You may provide your income information by completing the NRAS Income Notification Form, including providing supporting documentation evidencing your gross income, to Village administration by email rachael.saunders@clv.com.au or 2 Bradford St Mount Lawley WA 6050.

To determine the relevant 12 month period to estimate your gross income, if you are applying for the:

- **52 week Residential Agreement** - this Agreement commences 5 January 2015 and ends 4 January 2016. You need to provide an estimate of your gross income for the 12 month period to your contract start date.

For more information on what is meant by 'gross income' and 'supporting documentation', refer to Question 6 (What do you mean by gross income) and Question 7 (What supporting documentation must I provide).

6. *What do you mean by 'gross income'?*

'Gross income' is your income received before tax and other deductions. Examples of what to include and what *not* to include when declaring your gross income to the Village for NRAS purposes are:

To be included:

- Income from all work related activities;
- Income from scholarships, bursaries, prizes and stipends (although you are required to include all income from this source, income for tuition costs will be excluded in determining your eligibility for NRAS purposes);
- Income received from the Australian Government, including rental assistance and youth allowance;
- Interest and dividends earned on investments, including interest from bank accounts and share dividends;
- Income from other sources including overseas Government assistance;
- Income from families for accommodation costs only.

Not to be included:

- Lump sum payments such as lottery wins;
- Pocket money/allowances received from your parents (except where paid as a salary or for accommodation payments).

7. *What 'supporting documentation' must I provide?*

In addition to submitting the completed NRAS Income Notification Form, you will also be required to provide supporting documentation substantiating your income specified in the NRAS Income Notification Form. Examples of supporting documentation that could be provided includes (please note, these are examples only and are not exhaustive):

- Most recent payslip from each employer (showing your year-to-date income);
- Letter from your employer(s);
- Notices of assessment for annual tax returns;

- Statements from Centrelink;
- Scholarship offer letters.

If the Village is unable to satisfactorily determine your income based on the NRAS Income Notification Form and the supporting documentation submitted by you, you may be required to complete a Statutory Declaration. Refer to Question 8 (What is a Statutory Declaration) for more information. If you fail to do so, you will not be eligible to be considered for an NRAS Dwelling.

8. What is a statutory declaration?

A statutory declaration is a written statement of facts, declared to be true by you in the presence of an authorised witness. In Western Australia, statutory declarations must be made in accordance with the *Oaths, Affidavits and Statutory Declarations Act 2005* (WA) (the **Act**). The Act defines who may act as an authorised witness of a statutory declaration, and a list is included at page 2 of the Statutory Declaration form.

A person who intentionally makes a false statement in a statutory declaration is guilty of an offence under the Act and may be fined or jailed, or both.

9. What will you do with my income information?

Your income information will be used solely for the purposes of ECU Village determining your eligibility for NRAS Dwellings. Except as disclosed in the NRAS Income Notification Form, your income information will not be disclosed to people outside Campus Living Villages other than in accordance with any legal obligation (for example, we may be required to provide your information to the Commonwealth or WA Government to comply with the NRAS funding obligations), or to persons who have no need of access to the information, unless you tell us in writing that you agree for us to do so. See also CLV's Privacy Policy.

10. Who will assess my eligibility?

ECU Village, as the NRAS approved accommodation provider, is responsible for assessing an individual's initial and continuing eligibility to live in an NRAS Dwelling.

It is also your responsibility to advise the Village if your income situation changes, which may impact on your continued eligibility to reside in an NRAS Dwelling. Refer to Question 12 (What happens if my income exceeds the Initial Income Limit) and Question 13 (What happens if my income exceeds the Upper Income Limit).

11. If I am eligible, does this mean I will receive an accommodation offer?

No necessarily, as there are limited NRAS Dwellings and high demand for such dwellings. ECU Village does not guarantee that all eligible applicants will receive an offer for NRAS Dwellings.

If you are not eligible for NRAS Dwellings, ECU Village will, subject to availability and suitability, consider you for non-NRAS accommodation.

12. What happens if my income exceeds the Initial Income Limit?

Application stage - Individuals whose income as listed on their accommodation application is above the Initial Income Limit set out in the table in Question 2 will not be eligible to live in the NRAS approved accommodation, but may still be considered for non-NRAS accommodation.

During term - Where you receive and accept an offer for NRAS approved accommodation and it is subsequently determined that your income is above the Initial Income Limit or the Upper Income Limit (as the case may be), then the Village will, subject to availability and suitability, locate you to an alternative room in a non-NRAS Dwelling at ECU Village.

13. What happens if my income exceeds the Upper Income Limit?

Application stage - Individuals (or individuals of a shared NRAS Dwelling) whose income or total combined income (as applicable) as listed on their accommodation application is above the Upper Income Limit set out in the table in Question 2 will not be eligible to live in the NRAS approved accommodation, but may still be considered for non-NRAS accommodation.

During term - Where your annual income exceeds the Upper Income Limit (set out in the table at Question 2 above) during the term of your Residential Agreement relating to an NRAS Dwelling:

- (a) you must to notify ECU Village as soon you are aware of the change (by submitting a revised NRAS Income Notification Form);
- (b) you will no longer be eligible to live in the NRAS Dwelling under the NRAS conditions;
- (c) ECU Village will, subject to availability, offer you a room in a non-NRAS Dwelling at the Village for the balance of your unexpired term;
- (d) where there is no availability at ECU Village, ECU Village may (at its discretion) let you continue to reside in the NRAS Dwelling provided that you pay the prevailing market residential fee applicable for your room type until such time a non-NRAS room at the Village becomes available.

14. Why have I been provided a Residential Agreement for 52 weeks?

As part of the NRAS conditions, ECU Village is required to offer to residents (or prospective residents) of NRAS Dwellings 52 week Residential Agreement.

15. Does this mean that the residential fees for the NRAS approved dwellings are 20% less than those of the non-NRAS rooms at ECU Village?

Not necessarily. The market value of the NRAS Dwellings is determined by an independent property valuer (**market valuation**) and the residential fees for the NRAS Dwellings are then set at 20% below this market valuation.

The residential fees for the balance of the non-NRAS dwellings at ECU Village are set independently of the above process, however, the residential fees and other charges are set within parameters agreed as reasonable between ECU Village and Edith Cowan University.

16. Where can I get more information about NRAS?

More information on NRAS can be found at the following sites:

- Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (**FAHCSIA**)
<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/our-responsibilities/housing-support/programs-services/national-rental-affordability-scheme>
- Government of Western Australian Department of Housing
<http://www.housing.wa.gov.au/aboutus/strategyandpolicy/nras/Pages/default.aspx>